

City of Santa Barbara
COVID-19 Business Advisory Task Force
May 8 Meeting Summary

- Almost all of the Business Advisory Task Force members were able to join and participate in the meeting with Mayor Cathy Murillo and City staff.
- City Administrator Paul Casey gave summary comments on the City's efforts to maintain City services and he noted that the City's budget review process would begin this month with a fiscal year 2020-2021 budget to be adopted by the end of June. He stated that the adopted budget will need to be monitored closely and updated frequently due to the continued changes in the economy.
- Nancy Anderson with the County provided an overview of the County's efforts to prepare the County's Phased Reopening Guide. The County was completing its business sector roundtable effort in which over 20 different business sector representatives were engaged to gather input into the draft Reopening Guide.
- Paul and Nancy both reported that the Governor recently announced revised public health criteria that would have to be met prior to the easing of stay at home orders and that County reopening plans could not subdivide their regions related to public health data or reopening plans. There were numerous questions and statements of concern of the Governor's inflexible stance and impacts to the business community, workers/residents and economy.
- City staff reported that a letter was being finalized to send to the County providing the task force feedback and recommendations to the County's draft Reopening Guide. There was passionate discussion on the need to stress to the County and Governor the need to reopen the economy as the public's health was in jeopardy due to unemployment, loss of income and stress of these conditions potentially longer lasting than the COVID-19 virus. Staff stated a commitment to include that concern in the letter to the County.
- Nina with the City gave an update on the City's communication efforts on business assistance, Spanish language resources and City service handouts as well as social media, newsletter and email blasts.
- Jason Harris with the City gave an overview of the formation of three committees that the task force members initial ideas and recommendations were grouped under. He stated that there was a streets/sidewalk/surface parking grouping of ideas but that they either were related to event street closures and the regulatory issues to allow. He suggested that those concepts move into those other committee groups for further discussion:
 - **Marketing/Events/Area Activations Committee**
 - **Regulations/Permitting Committee**

- **Business Assistance/Support Committee**

- There was collective review and discussion of the initial ideas expressed and listed under each committee. Suggestions made to address macro communications and marketing for the region and local area and that public safety is being maintained. The micro details to be marketed locally such as specific events to attract locals and the public to come out.
- Additional discussion regarding efforts to attract new businesses to address the potential vacancy that will appear as businesses close. Jason referenced that the intent of the task force was to focus efforts on the immediate needs of businesses to help them survive, reopen and recover and that ideas such as recruitment of new businesses could be address in the City's Economic Development Plan which he will be drafting in the coming months.
- The meeting concluded with task force members highlighting the need for immediate action and responses and a desire to meet weekly instead of biweekly. City staff stated that committee meetings would be scheduled in the upcoming week and additional task force meetings would be scheduled for the group to reconvene the following week.